



John Brunjes photo

SPRING SQUIRREL HUNTING

SPRING HUNTING SEASON

SPECIES	Spring Season
Squirrel	May 21-June 17

Q: Can a hunter use dogs when hunting squirrels in the spring?

A: Yes. Hunting squirrels with dogs puts a new spin on the traditional pursuit, creating a more social atmosphere for small groups of hunters.

The Feist and Mountain Cur are two breeds of dogs often used for squirrel hunting. They are high energy, hard working little dogs that use all their senses to find squirrels.

They smell where a squirrel has been walking on the forest floor, and follow its trail to a tree. Well-trained dogs stay on the tree, with their feet up, baying.

Hunters can often tell if the dog has seen a squirrel, or just smelled one, based on the dog's bark. Treed squirrels are preoccupied with the barking dogs and often present hunters with easy shots.

SQUIRREL BAG LIMITS

- Daily limit is 6; possession limit is 12.
- Trapping squirrels is prohibited during the spring season.
- Hunting squirrels with slingshots or blowguns is prohibited.

SPRING SQUIRRELS

Squirrels are Kentucky's most stable and abundant small game species.

This year, the **spring squirrel season has been lengthened to 28 days, and starts earlier, on May 21.**

The spring season opens after the first of two nesting periods, so squirrel populations are high. Young squirrels leave the nest after 45 days, to venture off on their own. Litters are typically three to four squirrels.

The gray squirrel is the dominant species in the eastern third of Kentucky, with a higher percentage of fox squirrels in far western Kentucky. Gray squirrels are most often found in large tracts of

LEGAL EQUIPMENT

Hunters may **ONLY** use the following to take squirrels during the spring season:

- Rifles that shoot rimfire ammunition, or .22 caliber handguns.
- Muzzle-loading or breech-loading shotguns no larger than 10-gauge. Breech-loading shotguns must be plugged to hold a maximum of three shells (two in magazine and one in chamber).
- Lead or non-toxic shot no larger than number 2.
- Muzzle-loading rifles.
- Archery or crossbow equipment.
- Pellets fired from .177, .20 or .22 caliber airguns.
- Dogs may be used to aid in the hunt.

forest lands. Fox squirrels prefer small woodlots and wooded fencerows of agricultural areas.